

3.5.7 Rock Creek Fire Protection District

This FPD only covers 5,169 acres including 71 acres of BLM land and 5,099 acres of private land inside Cassia County. More than 95% of the District is in the neighboring Twin Falls County. Consequently, this District will be covered in more detail in the Wildfire Mitigation Plan being prepared for Twin Falls County.

The Rock Creek FPD has four fire stations – Kimberly, Murtaugh, Hansen, and Rock Creek, and responded to 151 incidents for calendar year 2003. The Rock Creek and Murtaugh stations are located within 2.5 and 5 miles, respectively, on paved two-lane roads, from the district lands in Cassia County. The overall response time to incidents in the district is typically under 10 minutes.

The Rock Creek FPD has the capability to respond 5 Class A structural apparatus to fires within the District based on the Chief and Incident Commanders discretion. Additionally, the District has tenders and tender/pump units with a capacity of 8,000 gallons. Two four-wheel drive units with an 800-gallon capacity each are available as quick attack units and to respond to wildland fires in the District.

A 42-member volunteer fire department force mans the FPD. The District has four drills per month and the volunteers are required to attend at least one of these each month. Most of the Rock Creek volunteers attend 50 to 75% of the sessions. The drills cover wildland, structural, hazardous material, and extrication topics.

Figure 16 shows heavy sagebrush-grassland fuels within a Cooperative Management Area.



Figure 16. Heavy fuels within a Cooperative Management Area.

Fire, Structural, and Community Assessments for Rock Creek FPD

The following is a summary of the Fire Hazard Assessment for Rock Creek FPD. Table 25 shows the complete results. Overall, the two subdivisions received a Class A (low) fire hazard assessment rating for 2 out of 12 elements (17%) and a Class B (medium) rating for 10 out of 12 elements (83%).

Vegetation Type – Sagebrush-grassland and some juniper is the primary carrier of any ignition to the wildland-urban interface.

Slope – Slopes within the assessment area are moderate (10-30 %).

Aspect – Structures within the assessment area have a northerly aspect..

Elevation – The elevation within the assessment area averages is between 3500-5500 feet.

Fuel Type – The fuel types within the assessment area is medium fuels (brush, medium shrubs, and small trees).

Fuel Density – The fuel density within the assessment area is moderate fuel adjacent to federal land (31 to 60% cover).

Fuel Bed Depth – The majority fuel bed depth with the assessment area is 1-3 feet.

Table 25. Fire Hazard Assessment for Rock Creek FPD

Subdivision/Parcels	Vegetation Type	Rating Elements					
		Slope	Aspect	Elevation	Fuel Type	Fuel Density	Fuel Bed Depth
Parson	Sagebrush/Grass	B	A/B	B	B	B	B
Antelope Valley/Dry Creek	Sagebrush/Grass/Juniper	B	A	B	B	B	B

A=Class A low fire hazard assessment rating

B=Class B medium fire hazard assessment rating

C=Class C high fire hazard assessment rating

The following is a summary of the Structural Hazard Assessment for Rock Creek FPD. Table 26 shows the complete results. Overall, the subdivisions received a Class B (medium) rating 4 out of 14 elements (29%) and a Class C (high) rating 4 out of 14 elements (29%).

Structure Density – The structure density within the assessment area is at least one structure per 10 acres.

Proximity to Fuels – The Structures within the assessment area and adjacent to the wildland urban interface range from less than 40 feet to 40-100 feet to flammable fuels.

Building Materials – Ten to 50% of the structures have fire resistant roofs and/or siding.

Survivable Space – Ten to 50% of the structures have improved survivable space around property.

Roads – Roads within the assessment area are narrow and or single lane, minimally maintained, with no shoulders.

Response Time – Response time is typically less than 10 minutes to the assessment area via paved two-lane roads.

Access – Narrow, dead end roads or 1 way in, 1 way out with steep grades.

Table 26. Structural Hazard Assessment for Rock Creek FPD

Subdivision/Parcels	Rating Elements						
	Structure Density	Proximity of Fuels	Building Materials	Survivable Space	Roads	Response Time	Access
Parson	N/A	C	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Antelope Valley/Dry Creek	C	B	B	B	C	B	C

A=Class A low fire hazard assessment rating

B=Class B medium fire hazard assessment rating

C=Class C high fire hazard assessment rating

Table 27 summarizes the Community Assessment for Rock Creek FPD.

Table 27. Community Assessment Summary for Rock Creek FPD

Rating Element	Class A	Class B	Class C	Rating (A, B, or C)
Community Description	There is a clear line where residential business, and public structures meet wildland fuels. Wildland fuels do not generally continue into the developed area.	There is no clear line of demarcation; wildland fuels are continuous outside of and within the developed area.	The community generally exists where homes, ranches, and other structures are scattered but adjacent to wildland vegetation.	B
Response Time	Prompt response time to interface areas (20 min or less).	Moderate response time to interface area (20-40 minutes).	Lengthy response time to interface area (40+ minutes).	A
Firefighting Capability	Adequate structural fire department. Sufficient personnel, equipment, and wildland firefighting capability and experience.	Inadequate fire department. Limited personnel, and or equipment but with some wildland firefighting experience and training.	Fire department non-existent or untrained and/or equipped to fight wildland fire.	B

Water Supply	Adequate supply of fire hydrants and pressure, and/or open water sources (pools, lakes, reservoirs, rivers, etc.).	Inadequate supply of fire hydrants, or limited pressure. Limited water supply.	No pressure water system available near interface. No surface water available.	C
Local Emergency Operations Group (EOG)	Active EOG. Evacuation plan in place.	Limited participation in EOG. Have some form of evacuation process.	No EOG. No evacuation plan in place.	C
Structure Density	At least one structure per 0-5 acres.	On structure per 5-10 acres.	Less than one structure per 10 acres.	C
Community Planning Practices	County/local laws and zoning ordinances require use of fire safe residential design and adequate ingress/egress of fire suppression resources. Fire Department actively participates in planning process.	Local officials have an understanding of appropriate community planning practices for wildfire loss mitigation. Fire department has limited input to fire safe development and planning efforts.	Community standards for fire safe development and protection are marginal or non-existent. Little or no effort has been made in assessing and applying measures to reduce wildfire impact.	B
Fire Mitigation Ordinances, Laws, or Regulations in Place	Have adopted local ordinances or codes requiring fire safe landscaping, building and planning. Fire Department actively participates in planning process.	Have voluntary ordinances or codes requiring fire safe landscaping and building practices. Fire Department practices in planning process.	No local codes, laws or ordinances requiring fire safe building landscaping or planning processes.	B
Fire Department Equipment	Good supply of structure and wildland fire apparatus and miscellaneous specialty equipment.	Smaller supply of fire apparatus in fairly good repair with some specialty equipment.	Minimum amount of fire apparatus, which is old and in need of repair. None or little specialty equipment.	B
Fire Department Training and Experience	Large, fully paid fire department with personnel that meet NFPA or NWCG training requirements, are experienced in wildland fire, and have adequate equipment.	Mixed fire department. Some paid and some volunteer personnel. Limited experience, training and equipment to fight wildland fire.	Small, all volunteer fire department. Limited training, experience and budget with regular turnover of personnel. Do not meet NFPA or NWCG standards.	C
Community Fire Safe Efforts and programs already in place	Organized and active groups (Fire Dept.) providing educational materials and programs for their community.	Limited interest and participation in educational programs. Fire Department does some prevention and public education.	No interest of participation in educational programs. No prevention/education efforts by fire department.	B

Community support and attitudes	Actively supports urban interface plans and actions.	Some participation in urban interface plans and actions.	Opposes urban interface plans and efforts.	B
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